

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
January 23, 2018
Great Hall, Town Hall**

The Open Session meeting of the School Committee convened at 6:30 pm. Those present included Committee Chair Michael D'Ortenzio Jr., Vice Chair Matt Kelley, Secretary Melissa Martin, and members Tony Bent and Sharon Gray; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendents Judy Belliveau and Joan Dabrowski, and Student Advisory members Kate Dario and Arya Amuzgar. Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. announced that the meeting is being recorded by local media.

CITIZEN SPEAK

Dr. Tad Heuer, Abbott Street resident, addressed the Committee regarding his concerns with the proposed Security Cameras Policy and Public Records Act implications. He referenced his letter to the Committee which he recently sent that specifically outlines his concerns and recommended revisions to the policy.

RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Lussier acknowledged the following individuals and groups:

From Director of Early Childhood Education Rebecca Zieminski: Thanks to the **PAWS PTO** for hosting a wonderful Winter Carnival for PAWS families on January 21st in the Hardy gym. The preschool children and their siblings enjoyed face painting, balloon animals, popcorn and snacks, decorating mugs, and a movie, accompanied by lots of fun and running around! It was a great opportunity for families to spend time together before the Patriots game.

From Hunnewell Principal Ellen Quirk: Thank you to **Katie Dexter**, Hunnewell Music Teacher and **Russell Wilson**, Hunnewell Sprague Orchestra Conductor for a fabulous winter concert at Hunnewell School.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Martin thanked the **High School PTSO** for welcoming her and Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. to a recent meeting where budget issues were discussed.

Mr. Kelley attended the kickoff presentation for the **NEASC accreditation process** for the high school. There was discussion relative to the philosophy of this work, goals and how it will be rolled out in Wellesley.

Ms. Gray reported on the recent **PAWS Feasibility Study Selection Committee** meeting where members heard presentations from two architectural firms that are bidding on the project: TBA Architects of Concord and Tappè Architects of Boston. After the presentations, the Committee selected Tappè Architects to conduct the study.

Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. thanked the **High School PTSO** for hosting him and Ms. Martin at its recent meeting. He reported he will be attending the NRC meeting on Thursday evening to continue discussion regarding **Phase II of the Track and Field Project**.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lussier reported **Ken Kay, CEO of EdLeader21**, met with approximately 250 members of the community on Monday night to address preparing students for their 21st century lives. Those present at the meeting were very excited about the presentation and this concept. He reminded the community that WPS is soliciting community involvement in the newly formed **Profile of a Graduate Task Force**. Sign up closes on January 24th. The first meeting is scheduled for February 7, with subsequent meetings on March 7, and May 1st. Dr. Lussier informed the community that the first **Kindergarten Roundup** for next year's school registration is scheduled for January 31st, from 3 to 6 pm. He also reported that the Administrative team is holding its annual **mid-winter retreat** on Friday, January 26th, to reflect on the progress of this year's goals and just have a general check in. He thanked Wellesley College President Johnson for providing the venue for this event.

STUDENT ADVISORY

Ms. Dario reported that **Senior Project** proposals are due on February 2nd. There are many exciting projects being considered. Student Congress is planning **Seminar Day** for March 7th and students are working to find individuals who can lead some interesting seminars. There is a consideration for a **juice bar** in the high school cafeteria, providing a place for students to unwind and recharge.

Mr. Amuzgar informed the group that the League of Women Voters held a **voter registration** drive for students at the high school. Student Congress is having discussions about moving the **grading system** from quarters to semesters to relieve some of the stress, and the impact this may have on seniors applying to colleges. Dr. Lussier noted that the voting poll has been officially moved from the high school to the Tolles Parsons Center to help alleviate congestion at the high school.

PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing for the WPS FY19 Budget was opened and closed at 6:56 pm. No comments were received.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Minutes: January 9, 2018 Open Session
- Declaration of Surplus Books: Hardy Library

Upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Dr. Bent, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

WMS REMAINING PROJECTS & STUDY REQUEST

Facilities Management Director Joe McDonough joined the Committee to address the remaining capital projects and a study request for the Middle School. He reviewed each project including the piping and paving projects previously presented to the Committee, kitchen equipment replacement, HVAC replacement, interior doors and cabinetry, and repair of the exterior façade. The last three items were projects recommended by SMMA in its 2014 study that were not completed at that time. These three projects require a comprehensive study. Pending Committee approval, \$125,000 will be

requested for this study at the 2018 Annual Town Meeting. The total cost estimate for these projects is \$15,520,800. This work will address all major projects at the Middle School. Future considerations include a roof replacement and LED lighting replacement.

Dr. Lussier reminded the Committee that the Middle School kitchen is used to prepare food for students in all schools excluding the high school.

2016-17 PROGRESS REPORT UPDATE

Dr. Lussier was pleased to distribute a final draft of the WPS District Progress Report for the 2016-17 School Year. He acknowledged all the members of the Progress Report Superintendent's Advisory Committee who worked in preparation of the report, as well as the sponsors who are covering the postage to mail the report to all residences in Wellesley. Going forward, it is expected that the report will be sent out in the late summer/early fall.

The Committee commended the Progress Report SAC members for the excellent work in preparation of this report. The Committee asked that the report reflect the District's challenges as well as its accomplishments, which Dr. Lussier addressed.

METROWEST ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY (MWAHS) ANALYSIS: WMS

The Committee was joined by K-12 Director of Fitness and Health Joanne Grant and Data Coordinator Karen Archambault who presented the 2016 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey results for the Middle School, specifically in the areas of substance use, bullying, mental health, school attachment and adult support. Areas that showed improvement include a decrease in cigarette smoking, alcohol use, and school bullying. Areas needing additional analysis and attention are cyberbullying, stress which increases over the Middle School grades and is more pronounced in girls, and mental health including school-based and social stresses.

The Committee was pleased to see improvements in student behavior and attitudes, but continues to be concerned that although the percentage of students with troubling issues is low, the number still equates to a number of students who are still struggling in various ways. This is not just a District issue, but rather a societal issue that needs to be addressed on a wider area than just in the schools.

The Committee was pleased with the improvements that were reported, but feels disheartened that there are still students who are struggling. The report is good data that provides a benchmark for discussion during the budget process.

Ms. Grant informed the Committee that the MWAHS was a 10-year initiative that has now been extended at the request of communities that have reported that this data has provided valuable insight to student behavior.

FY19 BUDGET

Ms. Belliveau reviewed the adjustments made since the last Committee meeting discussion, including increasing to a 73 percent reimbursement assumption for Circuit Breaker, which brings the total FY19 budget request to 3.51 percent over FY18. Staff

was asked to adjust the budget request total to reflect a 3.5 percent increase over FY18, which brings the total exactly to guideline.

Mr. D'Ortenzio, Jr. addressed the significant unanticipated costs that can arise in Special Education from year to year. This is a significant structural problem in school districts that leave the districts and towns financially vulnerable annually. There is a need to develop a long-term funding strategy to address these costs. Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. will coordinate with the Selectmen to schedule a discussion concerning this issue at a future date.

The Committee thanked Dr. Lussier and the Administrative team for their excellent work in preparing a budget that addresses school needs as well as considering the Town's overall fiscal constraints. Action is planned for January 30th.

SC POLICIES REVIEW

Dr. Bent recommended deferment on action of Policy JF, Admission of Students, noting that comments were received from a constituent requesting shorter periods than a semester for foreign student visits to WPS. The Policy Subcommittee will address this at its next meeting.

Dr. Bent then addressed Policy ECAF, Security Cameras, referencing a letter received from Dr. Heuer suggesting some refinements in the language regarding access to the security camera footage and who is able to see that footage. Dr. Bent recommended deferment of action on this policy pending review of Dr. Heuer's comments. The Policy Subcommittee will address this at its next meeting as well as discuss it with Town Counsel.

HHU/MSBA UPDATE

The School Building Committee is meeting on Thursday, January 25, to discuss issues addressed at the last School Committee meeting including scope and process, moving forward with the Hunnewell School project separately from the master plan, and potentially using the St. Paul School building as swing space. In addition, the SBC will consider a work order for SMMA to review the St. Paul's property as swing space.

CITIZENS SPEAK No one present wished to speak.

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 8:25 pm, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Mr. Kelley, the Committee ***unanimously VOTED*** to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Martin
Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used:

Letter from Dr. Tad Heuer RE: Draft Policy ECAF

Constituent Letter Regarding Draft Policy JF

FMD Presentation on WMS Remaining Capital Projects 1/23/18

2016 MetroWest Health Survey Results for WMS Presentation

Draft Progress Report

FY19 Budget Discussion Doc